

A crisis in the cotton trade is threatened on the Bolten. The manufacturers are dissatisfied owing to bad work in the mills by the operatives, and a partial strike is about to become a general lockout.

THE PANAMA CANAL.
New York, 25th December.
News from Panama dated December 15th says.—Dr Lescage has telegraphed that the continuation of work on the canal was assured.

Work on the canal continues although on some sections the number of labourers has been reduced. Altogether 2,000 men have been discharged during the past two months owing to disputes between the canal company and the contractor.

The highest authorities consider the total suspension of work as very improbable.

LAURENCE OLIPHANT'S AFFAIRS.
LONDON, 26th December.

Laurence Oliphant's affairs have been taken charge of by his cousin, Arthur Oliphant, and by Hackett Smith, who was Oliphant's agent and associate in his Syrian enterprise. Oliphant had telegraphed for Smith from Haifa some

weeks ago, his medical skill having on previous occasions been effective in relieving him of severe attacks of illness.

THE VATICAN AND RUSSIA.

LONDON, 27th December.

A dispatch from Rome to the *Standard* says:—The Russian mission to the Vatican has obtained various concessions from the Pope. His Holiness sanctions the deportation of the Bishop of Vilna to Siberia; accepts the Russian, G.

ment candidates for the diocese of Dublin and Pleko, and consents to the introduction of the Russian language in all Catholic churches except in the liturgy, an innovation that will completely destroy the Polish element. It is certain that French influence had much to do with the granting of these concessions.

AKRON, Ohio, 27th December.
Thomas A. Edison spent Christmas with his father-in-law, Louis Miller of this city. In an interview he said he was now working on an invention whereby electricity would be produced direct from coal, dispensing entirely with the boilers, engines, dynamos, etc., now required. Beside, he said, he would use nearly the entire heat units of the coal, instead of only about 5 per cent.

AFRICAN SLAVE-DEALERS.
LONDON, 27th December.
A Zanzibar dispatch says it has been discovered that an agreement in relation to slave-dealing exists between the English East Africa Company, the Sultan of Zanzibar and the Arab slave-dealers of Manbaza. The Arabs are authorized to carry on the trade in slaves and flog or other

wise punish. The English Mission stations are obliged under the agreement to return runaway slaves to their owners. The English Consul has issued a proclamation warning all British subjects in Zanzibar that they are liable to seven years' imprisonment if they enter into contract for slave labour. The British traders have now a united protest against the order. The Consul will suspend the enforcement of the proclamation until the British Government has been consulted.

The Secretary of the English East Africa Company denies the story from Zanzibar about the agreement between the company, the Sultan and Arab slave-dealers. The only action Agent Mackenzie in regard to slaves has been pay for the liberation of 1,400.

DRAGGED TO DEATH.
LONDON, 25th December.
Hector Balth, captain of Lord Russell's

was killed to-day while hunting near Neuge Country Tipperary. Her horse stumbled and she fell from the saddle. Her feet becoming entangled in the stirrups she was dragged for some distance head downward.

THE CROFTS. COLONIZING SCHEME.
LONDON, 28th December.

The appointment of the Crofts' Canadian Commission is announced in the official gazette.

The members are the Marquis of Lothian, Sir Charles Tupper, Mr. King and Thomas Skene and they are empowered to select highland families for colonisation in Canada.

THE PARNELL INQUIRY.
DUBLIN, 29th December.
The Freeman's Journal asserts that the Times sent a man to Pueblo, Col., to induce Sheridan to testify before the Parnell Commission, pro-

Prado, the murderer of Marie Aguiñaga, was executed this morning. He was unconcerned and acted as if he were simply an on-looker. E

made no confession, and smiled blandly when his arms and legs were pinioned behind. He refused the services of the priests, and shed tears dramatically at the ignominy of the guillotine. It mattered a few unintelligible words, then bowed his head for the fatal stroke.

A large crowd jeered when he came from the jail and shouted satisfaction when the knife fell.

All night long there was a great howling mo-

There were numerous accidents. Women fainted and were carried away by the German darmes. Many had rented rooms a week before in the immediate vicinity of Roquette to gratify their carnal desires.

After the execution the crowd dispersed in an orderly manner.

Prade was an accomplished villain whose romantic career was filled with disgraceful and cowardly and murderous deeds.

DE LESSEPS TO CONTEST FOR THE DEPUTIES
New York, 28th December.

It is stated that should the French Chamber of Deputies declare M. Villeneuve's seat vacant

on account of his confinement in the lunatic asylum, De Lessups will contest the seat. It is understood he and Boulanger will support each other.

GLADSTONE AND THE POPE.
NEW YORK, 27th December.
The *Mail* and *Express* London cable special says.—It is expected Gladstone will request a audience with the Pope before quitting Rome.

It is certain Leo will grant it. It is not believed in Vatican circles that in the event of an interview Gladstone intends a discussion of Irish affairs, as it is pretty clear that such a discussion would not be profitable either to Gladstone or Ireland in the present position of affairs. On his arrival Gladstone will be presented with a album of views of Rome, purchased by public subscription.

LONDON, 27th December.
The *Tablet* says Gladstone, in a letter to Marquis Dersic, says that the position of the Pope is important enough to merit intervention by national arbitration.

EMPEROR FREDERICK'S DIARY.
BERLIN, 25th December.
Professor Geffcken was examined in Berlin to-day in connection with the diary of the late

Emperor Frederick and his whole past career. His trial will begin at Leipzig about the middle of January.

A RUSSIAN SURPLUS.
St. Petersburg, 27th December.
The Budget for 1889 shows a surplus income of 2,000,000 roubles.

MISCELLANEOUS.

LONDON, 23rd December.
Max O'Rell was among the hard-working literary men unfortunate enough to lose heavily in the Panama canal fiasco, but his Paris publishers cheer him by writing that the advance demand for his new book on America is very large. It will be issued in Paris and New York the latter part of next month, but some weeks later in England.

Among the curious court cases this week is a suit to recover \$167 from a workman, on the cost of a divorce suit. The Judge made an order for the defendant to pay by instalments sixpence a week, which will take 150 years to pay the amount, not counting interest.

Still another Judge ordered a quaker out of court, and would not hear his testimony because he refused to remove his hat.

Willie, the married man, says that John Dillie

and other Irish members will visit Australia to recuperate their health, their real motive to raise money for the plan of campaign and the Parnell defence fund. Subscriptions from America have fallen off very much, and the League's finances are not able to stand the present strain. It is supposed that the large Irish population in Australia are enthusiastic for home rule and will contribute liberally.

The public reception to Chamberlain and his bride has been fixed for January 8th, but the progress is tardy. The subscription for two

On the 4th instant, H. E. Baron Geislingen, Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary for the Austrian Empire to the Courts of Siam, Siam, and Japan, arrived at Bangkok by steamer *Medusa*. His Excellency was accompanied by Prince Sapietha, and Herr J. Wilhelm Samson, as attachés. On the 5th instant, His Excellency had an audience with His Majesty the King of Siam, and presented his credentials.—*Siam Mercantile Gazette*.

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Hongkong, 1st December, 1883. [1629

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Hongkong, 9th May, 1881. 154

FOR NEW YORK.
THE 331 L. I. American Ship
 "STATE OF MAINE."
 G. Small, Master, shortly expected, will load
 here for the above Port, and will have a
 quick despatch.
 For Freight, apply to PUSTAU & Co.
 Hongkong, 20th December, 1888. [2345]

Hongkong, 29th January, 1889.

FOR SAN FRANCISCO:
THE ASIATIC British Bark

"KITTY."

Laird, Master, will load here for the above Port
and will have quick despatch.

For Freight, apply to
RUSSELL & Co.

Hongkong, 15th January, 1889.

14. 10.00 A.M. — Registry ceases.
10.30 A.M. — Posting of newspapers, books, patterns ceases.
11.00 A.M. — Mail closes.
LATE LETTERS may be posted (from 1 a.m.) until 10 cents late fee up to 11.30 a.m. after which hour they may be sent on at this same late fee.

Printed and Published by R. CHAFFERTON WIGMORE, Wyndham Street, Hongkong.

land close shaves by raising vehicles would

and close shaves by passing vehicles would naturally be frequent even if there were no unnecessary obstructions. But when the legitimate traffic is crowded the nuisance of empty jirikshas is added, the nuisance being that the empty jirikshas are always prowling about the main roads, becoming very trying even to the best of temper. Sir CHARLES WARREN recently made a calculation of the number of miles of traffic in London occupied by empty cabs. We do not know what length the number of empty jirikshas in motion at any given time in Hongkong would amount to, but we think it is not too much to say that from a quarter to one third of the total traffic is occupied by these vehicles loitering about in search of fares, and the space available for legitimate and necessary traffic is diminished by that amount. Pedestrians as well as drivers and riders are subjected to much annoyance in consequence. We have on more than one occasion drawn attention to the matter, and would again urge upon the Authorities the necessity of preventing our streets from being choked by the nuisance of narrow main thoroughfares crowded with empty jirikshas. The introduction of jirikshas has been a great convenience to the colony, but the convenience is largely discounted by the nuisance they become when allowed to loiter along the street in search of fares. For this nuisance the Authorities who permit it must be held responsible, though the coolies, who are naturally very idle, may be held to some extent within the limits allowed them, even at the risk of receiving an occasional cut from the driver of a passing trap. It hardly lies in Mr. KENNEDY'S mouth to complain of obstructions, however, seeing that he monopolises one of the roads of the colony for several hours every day as an exercise ground for his ponies. At these hours any one having occasion to pass along Albert Road must necessarily walk in the gutter, and even if the ponies were not there, the risk of a collision with a rickshaw or a native bullock cart would be a continual menace to the health and safety of the pedestrians. The nuisance caused by the use of Albert Road as an exercise ground for ponies ought to receive the attention of the Authorities no less than the nuisance caused by loitering jirikshas in Queen's Road.

[illegible]

Colonial Office has apparently arrived at a compromise on the question of appointing barristers or laymen as Magistrates in the Straits Settlements the following:—
For the examination in law of officers of the Service as cadets have been sanctioned.—An examination will be held in the month of January next, and those who have entered the Service, and are of not less than two or three years' standing. The subjects of the examination will be—The Law of Contract and Personal Property, the Law of Evidence, Criminal Law and Procedure, the Law of Torts, and the Law of Admiralty and Extradition.—The General Law of the Colonies, a general knowledge of all the laws of the Colonies will be required.—To each successful candidate is placed in the first class, a prize of \$500 a year, and, to each candidate placed in the second class, a prize of \$250. A candidate who obtained a place in the second class, not disqualified by his standing, be to present himself at a subsequent examination, and if he obtains a place in the first class will be entitled to a further prize of \$500 a year.—A candidate who fails to obtain a place in the first class will not be allowed to sit himself again for examination, except by the approval of the Government.—It will probably be decided in Hongkong that a candidate cannot profess to regard it as a victory solution of the question at issue, a distinct improvement on the system of giving to the Magistracy young men who had no training in the law whatsoever.—The appointment of barristers to the Magistracy will be discontinued.—The Police Court would be the only Magistrate's settlement, but on the subject of this it is said that this would be conducted with the efficiency of the present, generally, because the Magistrates are constitutionally, after some years' practice, a body to look for promotion, and if the Government were to say that they would not enter the Service, the force of objection must be recognised. Barristers could not be expected to enter the Magistracy, and it is very desirable that they should, if only to command a certain number of officers to have gone through the course of training prescribed by the Government.—The compromise arrived at by the Government of the Straits Settlements is therefore perhaps as good as the best that could be made, on giving regard to the efficiency of the Magistracy generally rather than to that of the branch of it which is concerned with the administration of justice. It is to be seen how it will work out in the future. The plans, to be of any use, must be thorough and, to some extent, a permanent, something more than a superficial, snatching of the best men from the various branches of law.

Mr. HENRY NORMAN, amongst his other discoveries in the Far East, has found an ice-breaking machine at Vladivostok which he believes is destined to play a most important part in international politics. It is usually believed that Vladivostok is a dead port for four months out of the twelve months, but Mr. Norman has just returned from the 17th of April to 1917. And this is regarded as the natural explanation of Russia's necessity to press gradually southwards for an open port in Korea or below it. Mr. NORMAN tells us, it is not the case. The machine is there, and therefore a steamship can go in or out of Vladivostok Harbour in the worst of weather.

Military had another field day on the 25th. The attacking force, six companies of the Regiment, attempted to take the different from south side of the island with a view of the town. Mount Kellett and Mount in accordance with their programme, were led by a body of the 69th Regiment under the command of Captain Collinson and under the command of Lieut. Andrew. Colonel Forbes Robertson had command of the entire force.

A meeting of the Legislative Council was held on the 28th inst. There were present:—

His EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, SR. WILLIAM DES VOGES, K.C.M.G.
Hon. E. S. DUNN, M.L.C., Colonial Secretary.
Hon. E. O'NEILL, Attorney-General.
Hon. H. E. WOODHOUSE, C.M.G., Colonial Treasurer.
Hon. J. M. PRICE, Surveyor-General.
Hon. W. M. DEANE, Captain Superintendent of Police.
Hon. J. STEWART-LOCKHART, Registrar-General.
Hon. WONG SHING.
Hon. J. BELL-IRVING.
Hon. B. LAYTON.
Mr. SMYTH, Clerk of Councils.

—MINUTES—

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

HIS EXCELLENCY—As members are aware the extraordinary meeting summoned to-day is called for a special object. I have prepared a message on the subject, but as it has not yet been printed I will read it from my draft:—

The Governor deems it his duty to draw the attention of the Council to the terrible famine in North China, with a view to the consideration whether some contribution in aid of the sufferers should not be made from the funds of this

Colony. Similar calamities are unfortunately too common among the dense population of the neighboring Empire; and sympathy is paralyzed, or rather its manifestation is checked, by their very proximity. The unbecomingly hopeless of affording relief at all proportionate to the enormous need for it. But if this consideration were allowed always to have its effect, the Government would be exceedingly narrow limits it acted altogether distinguished. And the only questions really deserving to be considered, either by Governments or by individuals, in respect of any particular case of distress, are (1) whether there may be some portion of the means at disposal, may be appropriately used, having regard to the many other objects deserving attention, and (2) whether the Government affords there is reasonable probability of its being properly and usefully applied.

As regards the first question, the position of Government differs from that of an individual in that the former is bound to play a part of sympathy and must confine his action to comparatively limited field. For the fund at

disposal being held as a trust, any application of them can be properly made only when, in proportion to its extent, it is beneficial directly or indirectly, to the contributing taxpayers, or to the community at large, or to the Government, in which case it meets with their general concurrence.

After much consideration, the Governor arrived at the conclusion that a reasonable contribution from the funds of the Colony towards the relief of the suffering, and the support of the mid of the sufferers by the provision of food, would fulfil one and probably both of the above conditions. For such a token of sympathy would be a means of promoting and strengthening those friendly relations with Chinese which are so all important to the prosperity of Hongkong while, having regard to the exceptional magnitude of the calamity, the pecuniary assistance on the one hand and the favourable publicity on the other, would be to the advantage of the Colony.

It was therefore decided to contribute £10,000, but one opinion in the colony as to the expenditure of the sum was in favour of its being applied to the above question, and the other in favour of the view: that, as to the proper application of the contributed funds

On this point also there is a satisfactory explanation. It is the fact that the Shanghai having, in the urgent need of the countrymen, made appeal for assistance, Europeans and Chinese have alike responded to the appeal, and are engaged by the bond of common humanity in working for the establishment of relief-agencies. When more regard is had to the number and names of those who are taking part in this movement, there is no room for pointing for resemblance to the aid of flood-stricken China. It is implied that that aid is urgently required, and that the amount of contribution, the Governor, all things considered, is of opinion that it will be at least ten thousand dollars. It is therefore interesting to find that the Government of British Hong Kong has decided to apportion the fund among the various relief agencies, without any regard to religious or denominational prejudices, in such a manner as according to their local discretion, may appear to be the best.

As no possible amount of contributions can afford substantial relief to all, or even to a large proportion, of the millions who are suffering from this calamity, the Governor hopes that it will be to be shown, that his proposals, will not prove to be chimerical. He trusts that the Government, to that private benevolence for which the community of Hongkong is so honourably known; and he trusts that he also, as a British official, Europeans and Chinese will extend their aid to the sufferers, and that the Government, if not equally, to the sympathies of both.

Continuing, His EXCELLENCY said—I would suggest that this should be considered at an early meeting of the Finance Committee. It will be for me, for many reasons, a matter of great importance. I am not sure that I can give a sufficient difference of opinion as to warrant the postponement of the meeting until to-morrow, but if there is any probability of unifying the rally, I think that the expediency of sending the rally to the 10th is not a matter for objection to the Committee meeting being held at once. It has been urged as very important that some aid should be sent before the Chinese Government can be asked to contribute. I think that those who understand the subject are of the opinion that it will be of much greater benefit now than later on. But supposing the Committee say now, I should not like to make one suggestion, namely, that the question of the aid to be sent should be considered more or less after the relation of this Colony with the neighbouring empire, the meeting be held with closed doors. I do not think it is likely that the Government will have any questions to be touched upon, but if so, let me make it plain—any excess of freedom combined with the publication of such expressions will do away with the good effect of such vote. It is of course as to the matter of the aid to be sent, the actual amount mentioned. That is a matter of comparatively small importance. I think that all things considered in view of the magnitude of the calamity, the aid to be sent, and the prosperous condition of our funds, the aid of much less amount would be unworthy of the Colony. However, I am quite willing to do what is equal, reduces any amount the Committee may decide. I do not think that my suggestions are made as to the means of distributing the funds I used scarcely any I shall give them my very best consideration. I have no objection to the aid to be sent to the appealing country, I dare say, members, but I think it even that I do. I do not think there is any question, however, that without exaggeration, there are some starving. Such is the magnitude of the calamity that I think it is not to be received here on Saturday that the Lord Mayor has started a fund for the purpose of relieving it. It is a matter of such importance as to involve such a great distance in England, and how much more distant, than us in Hongkong.

FINANCE.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table several financial minutes which were referred to

It having been decided to consider the question of granting a sum for the relief of the famine, at once, a meeting of the Finance Committee was held after the Council meeting. The Colonial Secretary presided.

[illegible]

THE CHAIRMAN.—By floods in one part and drought in another. I notice from the papers that a very large and influential committee has been organized in Shanghai for the purpose of collecting funds for distribution of which I commend to the Chairman. Action was first taken by the Taotai and the foreign community, and a mixed Committee of foreigners and Chinese was organized. I am glad to hear that Hon. J. BELL-IRVING asked if the Chinese did anything here.

THE CHAIRMAN said he had not heard of them doing anything here. Perhaps Mr. Wong Shing had heard of them from the point of view of Hon. WONG SHING who said that Chinese business had been formed here, and some money had been collected by them among the Chinese for food.

THE CHAIRMAN said the famine was an exceptionally heavy one. Whatever was done thousands of thousands of persons must inevitably perish. THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL—Has the Shanghai committee undertaken to distribute the money? THE CHAIRMAN—They are simply collecting, but I am quite sure it will be put to good use.

Hon. J. BELL-IRVING—I fancy it will be sent to the missionaries.

THE CHAIRMAN—I suppose you have no doubt that it will be sent to the missionaries, but I am especially made.

Hon. J. BELL-IRVING—I would not like to take that. It is sent to the missionaries it will be.

THE CHAIRMAN—I say in the telegram that the Foreign Missionary relief agency it will be uniformly distributed.

On the proposal of Hon. B. LAYTON, the sum of \$36,000 was recommended by the Committee to be voted by the Council for the relief of the distress in North China.

The CHAIRMAN said the other votes were voted but had been passed last year, but as this vote was not completed, they had to be revoked. They were:—For furniture for Victoria College, \$896; Home for women and girls \$3,954; Roads in Kennedy Town, \$6,700; Lower Richmond Road, \$2,750; Rain and storm, damages during 1888, \$2,261.

The following report by the Acting Postmaster-General was laid on the table at the last meeting of the Legislative Council:—

General Post Office,
19th July 1900.

2.—A new contract with the Pinfishian and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, for the conveyance of mails between Hongkong and China, was signed on the 1st of February. Up to the present all commerce has been carried on during their outbreak time. Although every effort was made on the part of this department to arrange for the timely departure of mail steamers at the usual times, this was not possible by the Chamber of Commerce (which was then headed by the London and Orient Companies) and the 17th of February was appended that as a general rule they were to leave at daylight, the days being Tuesday during the four seasons and Sunday during the monsoon. This was adhered to until the 31st May, when the four seasons was changed to the day to Saturday. On the 12th September the day was again changed to Wednesday.

[illegible]

	Inward.	Outward.	Total.
By P. & O. Packet	5,931	4,276	10,212
By German Packet	254	127	381
Total	6,185	4,403	10,588

The total number despatched and received in 1887 is 11,497. There is therefore an increase of 1,909.

7.—By the Christmas Mail from Europe, we received 435 parcels and by the New Year's Mail from Hongkong we despatched 107. These are the heaviest mails yet dealt with.

8.—On the 1st August the rates of Postage on parcels to the United Kingdom, were reduced as follows:—

1lb.	25 cents.
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9.—The London Office has laid down, that compensation not exceeding 20s. under any circumstances will be paid in case of loss of or damage to a parcel forwarded lb. from, or rough the United Kingdom.

10.—One parcel was sent by the British Aus-

12th.—On the 1st October the postage to the

13.—The date on which this report has to be
 out it makes it impossible to detail the revenue
 the department for 1888, which will not be de-
 titively ascertained for some months to come.

Gross revenue 1887	\$141,324.08
	<u>\$141,324.08</u>
Share of United Kingdom	\$ 51,985.18
Share of other countries	89,338.90

Conveyance of mails	1,572.45
Working expenses	35,971.74
Balance	10,869.80
	<u>\$141,324.06</u>

44.—The loose ship letters received show a considerable decrease. Although this mode of

15.—There were several instances of fraudulent enclosures of letters and embroidery, &c., in newspapers. These were taken out and forwarded, no rate being charged.

6.—Money Orders may now be exchanged in Bangkok.

7.—A renewed effort was made to have the mails by the French Packets sorted on board between Singapore and Hongkong. I understood that the question has been forwarded to proper authorities at home, strongly and

by His Excellency the Governor and the
Council for France. Should it meet with the
assent it deserves, it will be a great boon not
only to the Hongkong community but also to
the communities at the coast ports, for it fre-
quently happens that during the north-east
monsoon the coast steamers cannot sail until

As the coast readers cannot wait until mail is sorted, and the consequence is coast mails have to be kept back till the following morn. A gain during the present year the post mails have on several occasions arrived the same day, on which the homeward mails are to get it delivered so that letters may be forwarded by the express on that day.

On the 29th November a Peak delivery was introduced, which is as far as I can judge at present, a great convenience to the public. Of course during the winter months very few re-

service must naturally be small. During the summer months, however, I feel convinced that the service will be a source of revenue.

On the 29th November the number of local officers despatched is 296, and those received, 70. I take this opportunity of recording my thanks, Mr. F. B. G. J.

—The Postmaster General, in his report 1887, pointed out very strongly the urgency for increased and improved accommo-

and made a proposal for remedying the evils of the present building, and it is that early steps may be taken to effect an alteration as will be considered suitable with the ever increasing work of this department. The present building was completed in the year 1865 to meet the requirements of the time.

of the Colony at that time. Since then has year by year considerably increased every available space is occupied. A Pillar system at a house to house delivery are much needed, and to carry out these improvements satisfactorily, it is necessary to almost double our Chinese staff, but then we have no

to house them. The present staff are crowded together in a most inconvenient manner. A small allowance might be granted to live outside, but for obvious reasons it is preferable that they should reside on the premises. We also require separate stamp windows for Europeans and Chinese. A visit to

Post Office on a mail day would convince
ly of this.

